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Museum of Fine Arts Bulletin

Published Bi-monthly. Subscription price, 50 cents per year postpaid. Single copies, 10 cents
Entered July 2, 1903, at Boston, Mass., as Second-Class Matter, under Act of Congress of July 16, 1894

VOL. XIII

BOSTON, OCTOBER, 1915

No. 79



L'éducation fait tout

After Frogonard, by Nicolas de Launay

New Acquisitions of the Print Department

QUALITY being the only true criterion in matters of art, the current year, while not conspicuous for the number of acquisitions, will nevertheless surely be memorable in the development of the collection of prints. During the past months engravings, etchings, and lithographs of extraordinary importance as regards merit, interest, and rarity, have come to swell the resources of the Print Department. Brief mention was made in the June issue of the Bulletin of one of these accessions, a remarkable engraving by the Master Lcz, in an unusually fine state of preservation, secured for the Museum last April at the sale of

the Brayton Ives Collection. General Ives had been a keen, discerning collector, broadly catholic in his taste, consequently the sale of his prints offered opportunities positively unique, which were improved to a gratifying extent by the Museum because of the generous support given by the Trustees, the Visiting Committee, and other well-wishers.

Two series of engravings were acquired at that sale, each of which, singly, would have been cause enough for eminent satisfaction: the complete series of engravings of the "Passion" by Martin Schongauer, and a full set of the fifty so-called "Tarocchi," of North-Italian origin. Besides these chief items, twelve Italian engravings of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries demand



Luna
Anonymous. Florentine: Fifteenth Century



Sphere of Fixed Stars
Anonymous. Florentine: Fifteenth Century

attention, likewise examples typifying various phases of French excellence in the handling of graver, etching point, and lithographic crayon, not to forget a number of noteworthy items from The Netherlands and some English plates of considerable interest. While most of these prints are from the Ives Collection, accessions of note from other sources have been included to round out this sketch of a year's progress.

The Tarocchi Prints

The series of so-called "Tarocchi" (pr. tarokee) has formed the subject of discussions for more than a century. Despite later corrections Lanzi's designation of the set as "Giucio di Tarocchi del Mantegna" has left its impress on the prints known to this day among collectors as the "Tarocchi" although the qualification as a "giucio" (game) has long been disallowed, the sequence being generally recognized, to quote Sir Sidney Colvin, as "a picture lesson-book or encyclopedia of knowledge." The prints are now held to owe their existence as engravings to Northern Italy, in the late fifteenth century. The series was twice engraved there at that period, with certain character-

istic differences in the treatment of forms and the position of figures. The set acquired by the Museum is the so-called "E" series of these engravings, held by most authorities to be earlier and preferable to the other, or "S," set of engravings of these subjects. While our impressions cannot boast the depth of tone and freshness of those in the British Museum, the acquisition of this series will doubtless be a source of satisfaction to print lovers here, since, in the words of Dr. Willshire of the British Museum (1876), "They are of rarity under any conditions, and as a complete series very rare indeed." In five cycles of ten prints each, we behold the ranks of Man from Beggar to Pope; Apollo and the Muses; the Liberal Arts with Poetry, Philosophy and Theology; the Virtues with allegorical figures of Iliaco (the Sun), Chronico (Time), Cosmico (the Universe); finally figures impersonating the seven planetary spheres enfolding the earth, these in turn surrounded by the eighth sphere, that of Fixed Stars; the ninth, or Primum Mobile, source of the revolving motion of all the spheres; while the last plate is an abstract diagram of the all-enclosing Empyrean, the Prima Causa, seat of the Divinity. No other series in Italian

*Christ Entering Jerusalem**Master Lcz*

sified with strongly emphasized individuality of traits, he moves among them, yet is not of them. Striking effects are obtained by sharp contrasts of shadow and light; shade strokes are sparingly used and every line tells. The differentiation of colors in black and white is a later development, yet one is tempted to see initial efforts in that direction in the shaded garments of the two mercenaries, for instance, who force the crown of thorns down on the brow of the Man of Sorrows. An extensive discussion of Schongauer, his productions, charms and peculiarities, by Dr. Max Geisberg, is to be found in *The Print Collector's Quarterly* for April, 1914; readers are referred to that essay for sound information concerning an artist whose influence extended far beyond the confines of Germany.

A contemporary, swayed by this influence yet retaining a distinct individuality, is the artist whom we know by the initials "Lcz" found on the few engraved subjects which have survived to our day. His "Christ Entering Jerusalem," already mentioned in these pages, is a very precious acquisition indeed. Its fine grouping, breadth of treatment, despite his minute care of detail, expressiveness and correctness of drawing, are all so apparent as to need no comment.

engraving is so rich in characteristic form or so varied in presentation, so expressive of the great era to which it owes existence.

The Schongauer "Passion"

Among engravers of the fifteenth century the personality of Martin Schongauer stands preëminent. The slender-limbed figures which people his plates are living, acting beings; the mincing gait and affected attitudes which they sometimes display are quaintnesses of the period, readily overlooked as the power of the compositions reveals itself to the beholder. The set of twelve plates illustrating scenes of the Passion is one of the chief acquisitions of the Museum; it is the most important series brought forth by this great German master of the burin. In it we see crystallized the whole-hearted religious fervor of the man and of his time; in it is typified that Christ-figure familiar to all succeeding generations. These magnificent creations can now be seen by student and visitor in impressions which fully convey the message of the artist. The richness and depth of shadow is there, which relieves the delicate shadings, rounding and modelling the forms and insensibly blending into white high-light. One of the salient points in these compositions is the consistent idealization, the subtle sense of aloofness, which pervades the figure of Christ. Surrounded in the various scenes by types diver-

*Christ Crowned with Thorns**Martin Schongauer*

*The Musical Shepherds*

Giulio and Domenico Campagnola

Early Italian Engravings

Next to the "Tarocchi" series, the most important among the new accessions of Italian origin are two plates from the rare Florentine series of seven *Planets* by an anonymous engraver of the Finiguerra School (about 1460?).



Luna (Series of Planets)
Anonymous. Florentine: Fifteenth Century

From time immemorial the gleaming lights in the heavens have been held to possess specific powers and influences on man. The astrologers of antiquity and of the Middle Ages invested these arbiters of destiny with the characteristic qualities of the deities whose names they bore. Of the

two prints acquired, *Mars* and *Luna*, both good impressions, the latter is here shown. The goddess is presiding over the teeming world; "female planet," the inscription reads, "moist, cold, and phlegmatic, loving geometry and all that pertains to it . . . her element is water . . ." Hence the geometric arched bridge, the mill-wheel, sun-dial, bird-catching devices, the prevalence of water and bathers and fishermen, the lazy pack mule on the bridge, and so forth. In its clear, spirited rendering of so complex a scene it proves itself entitled to rank worthily among the galaxy of early Florentine engravings.

Contrary to the prevailing belief, Andrea Mantegna (1431-1506) is held to have himself engraved only seven of the many subjects attributed to his graver; all of which may be seen in the Museum collection. Of the "School" engravings, by professional engravers after his designs, one of the most noteworthy in its interpretation of Mantegna's grandeur, and incidentally one of the rarest, is the "Madonna in the Grotto," translating into graver lines his "Adoration" in the Uffizi,—a beautiful and most valuable addition to the collection. Zoan Andrea, one of the few engravers of that school known to us by name (flourished about 1475-1505), is represented by a charming group of Cupids, done in the prevailing, bas-relief-like manner, with bold outlines and straight, uniformly diagonal shadings.

Giulio Campagnola (1482?-1517?) was vouchsafed but a brief career. An infant prodigy, he lived, however, to attain a prominent position among early Italian engravers.

*The Madonna in the Grotto**School of Andrea Mantegna*

A strain of melancholy tinges his compositions. The merry group of musicians in the foreground of the plate here shown was added later by his namesake Domenico, but the charming landscape setting is typically Giulio's. Three further plates by Giulio Campagnola have been added to the collection: the graceful "Ganymede," soaring heavenward on an eagle of colossal stature, is an impression in the rare first state; the aged "Astrologer" with his chimerical attendant, an excellent second state with the characteristic stippled shading. This soft blending of the rigid lines by minute dot-like strokes is apparent likewise in the well-known scene of "Christ and the Woman of Samaria." The figures there are widely separated to give full sway to the delightful glimpse of the lagoon which fills the distance.

An anonymous artist of Northern Italy, known only by his monogram as Master P P with the Loop, wielded the graver about 1500. Only a few impressions of seven or eight of his plates are known to us. One of the finest of these, "Christ Lamented," has been secured for the Museum. In its initial state the plate seems to have been engraved with graver and dry-point, in lines so slightly cut that wear soon necessitated re-work. In this, our second state, the line work is almost submerged by stippling similar to that of Campagnola. While this re-work has not benefited the facial expression of the figures, the soft effect of such shading is decidedly pleasing throughout, and eminently satisfactory in the rendering of the dim distance.

Another anonymous engraver of the same

period, the Bolognese Master I B with the Bird, is represented by the most attractive of his plates, "Leda and her Children" at play with the swan. The last of our nameless masters is a Florentine (about 1480), the engraver of illustrations to Dante's "Divine Comedy." The plate acquired, one of nineteen, shows us Dante in fear, which is later stilled when Virgil relates his monitory vision of Beatrice. While the beautiful designs of Botticelli necessarily suffer much in this reduced adaptation to the copper, their grandeur still persists in a measure, helped in this instance by the excellence of the impression acquired.

The "Apollo and Diana" by Jacopo de Barbari (1440?-1505?) brings us, in conclusion, to an interesting personality. A binding link between South and North, Italian by birth and training, cosmopolitan by long residence in Germany and the Netherlands, he is usually pointed out as the apostle of Italian art in the North, though Northern influence is in turn visible in his engravings, with their distinct, strangely attractive figures, which so deeply impressed the young Dürer.



Paul Pontius

Anthony van Dyck

Dutch and Flemish Etchings

The realistic landscape — the woods and plains, shown as they really appeared to the artist, not abstract compositions on grand ideal lines, — this is one of our great heritages from the Dutch etchers of the seventeenth century. How well the stamp of individuality could be impressed upon these glimpses of actual nature is seen in plates like "The Travellers" (D. 4) of Jacob Ruysdael, a

swampy bottom fringed with gnarled oaks; again in the feathery leafage and broad plains of Herman Saffleven's fine view (B. 28), and in the little scene with the "Goatherd" (B. 1) by Cornelis Mattue.

All admirers of van Dyck's exquisite skill in portraiture will welcome such early additions to his "Iconography" as a first state — entirely traced by the master himself — of the Jan de Wael (W. 17), and a fine second state, here reproduced, of Paul Pontius (W. 9), besides later states of other important plates of that peerless portrait series.

French Prints

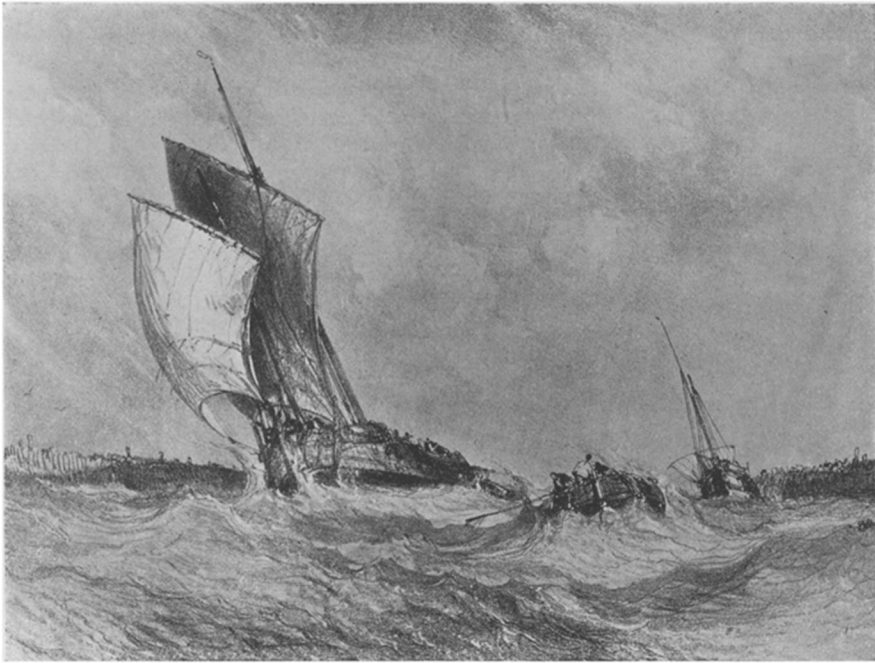
Prominent among early French engravers, Jean Duvet (1485–after 1561) leaves us compositions spirited and strangely crowded, somehow akin to the fantastic conceptions of William Blake. His great achievement is a series of twenty-three engravings illustrative of the Apocalypse, which, though published at the end of his life, in 1561, doubtless dates back to an earlier period. The Museum's collection of this rare series was enriched by "The combat of St. Michael and the Dragon." The encounter of heavenly and infernal hosts in serried ranks takes place in mid-air. Below them spreads a fortified town; in the foreground large cisterns open on the labyrinths of the nether world.

A contemporary of the German "Little Masters," Jean Gourmont (flourished 1506–1526), is represented by a small circular print of the "Flagellation." Like the preceding print, this also is in excellent preservation, an essential need in view of the small figures and minute detail. The scene is forcefully expressed with an effective play of light, though perhaps lacking the dignity which greater masters knew how to infuse into scenes of the Passion.

Two superb impressions of the "*Grandes Vues de Paris*," the "*Vue du Louvre*," and "*Vue du Pont Neuf*" add immensely to our illustrations of the genius of Jacques Callot (1592–1635), and similarly five additional portraits of royalty and nobility give a far better idea of the skill of Thomas de Leu (1560–1620).

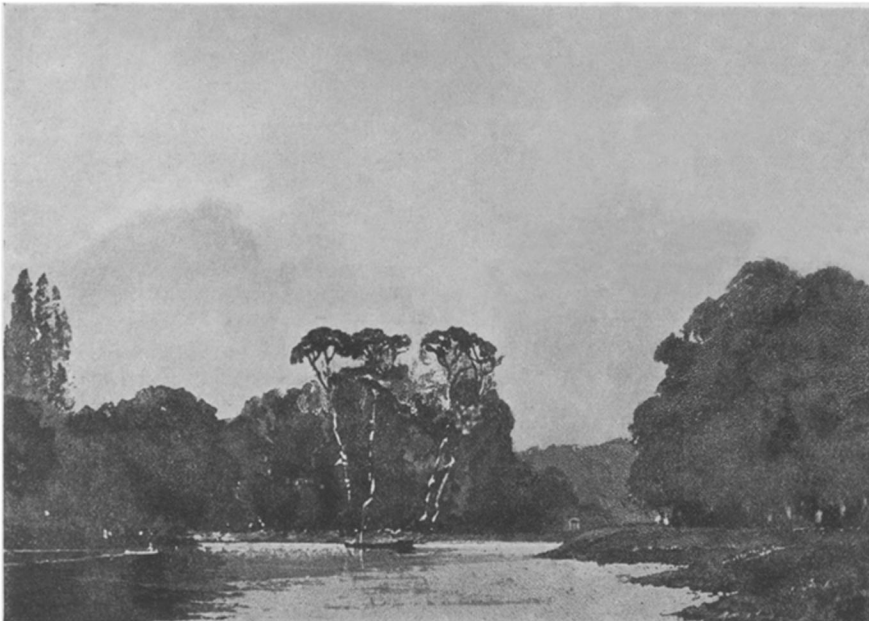
Two plates by Nicolas de Launay (1739–1792) bring us to the French eighteenth century, the days of masterly etcher-engravers. In "*L'éducation fait tout*," the delightful little scene after Fragonard, shown on the first page of this Bulletin, we find free, minute handling in the central subject, loose, shade strokes in the framework and wreath, and sketchy treatment on a diminutive scale in the little vignette designed by Choffard below the picture. Such diversified and extensive command of the medium deserves and repays close scrutiny. Not a mere engraver this, but rather an interpreter who gives final definition to the artist's vague, sketchy conceptions. Both this and the other plate, "*La Consolation de l'Absence*," after Lavreince, are typical of the best work of that period. As impressions they are beyond criticism, revealing every shade of meaning of the engraver.

A strange and quite unfounded prejudice lingers

*Retour au Port**Eugène Isabey*

in the minds of many print lovers concerning lithographs. Of their supposed inferiority and commercialism there is not a trace in the masterpieces of a Delacroix, Fantin-Latour, a Menzel or a Raffet, nor in the wonderful presentations of the sea which we owe to Eugène Isabey (1804–1886). Nine examples of this eminent artist have been recently acquired, among them the “*Retour au Port*” here illustrated. The sea has never been

more potently, more truthfully presented than in these plates with their astonishing flexibility of tone. His rival in command of the crayon, Richard Parkes Bonington (1801–1828), may well be mentioned here, since he is French by training in the medium in which he excelled, witness the “*Rue du Gros Horloge, Rouen*.” This lovely, silvery print also forms part now of the Museum collection.

*The Thames, Twickenham (Aquatint)**Sir Frank Short*

English Accessions

The generous bequest of Francis Bullard contained a representative selection of proofs of a mezzotint series known as "English Landscape,"—subjects designed by John Constable and engraved by David Lucas. Two rich, early trial proofs of "The Mill" and "Castle Acre Priory" respectively, recently received, help to illustrate the many formative changes of these splendid plates.

Mezzotint portraits by Charles Turner, John Smith and others, add interesting examples in this great field of English eminence. The English school is further enriched by several landscapes, in mezzotint and in aquatint, by that indefatigable teacher and exponent of the beauties of black and white, Sir Frank Short, whose powers are somewhat suggested by the accompanying illustration.

E. H. R.

French Gothic Niche

THE most recent addition to the collections of Western Art is the sculptured stone niche here illustrated. It is seven and one-half feet high, carved from a soft gray stone which has taken on various warm tones with age. Originally a detail of one of the great cathedrals, perhaps from a porch or from a royal tomb in one of the side chapels, it has been cut out in three sections and made to fit into a corner. The pedestal, which is attached to the slightly curved back of the niche, has a capital carved with twining Gothic leaves and undoubtedly supported the statuette of some saint. The base of the niche and pedestal are octagonal, as are also the side piers and the canopy which springs from them. These details and those of the canopy—the ogee arches, slightly foliated pinnacles and simple pierced tracery—suggest that the structure to which the niche belonged was of the early fifteenth century. F. V. P.

Gallery Books on Sale

A number of visitors to the Museum have asked to buy the manifolded gallery books lately installed as lending copies in the Renaissance Court. Copies of the books will hereafter be sold at thirty cents each, postpaid, or twenty-five cents at the Museum.

A series of similar books has been prepared for the Main Floor Galleries of Classical Art, and will shortly be installed. They will be sold at the same price.

These "Gallery Books" are complete lists of the objects shown in the galleries for which they are written. It is planned to keep them revised to correspond to changes of exhibition. They differ from catalogues of the collections in containing no objects which cannot be seen at the time. They differ from the Handbook of the Museum in mentioning every exhibit; and from labels in giving much fuller information than can be put on a card. They are a new form of aid to the Museum visitor, and it is hoped may be found a valuable dependence. Their first aim is to help toward the understanding of our exhibits by spectators on the spot. Nevertheless, with the aid of illustrations, obtainable in many cases at the Museum in the form of photographs and postal cards, they may become a useful means of reviewing at home what has been seen in the galleries.

G.



Sculptured Niche

*French Gothic
Early Fifteenth Century*